USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE INFORMATION ELEMENT OF NATIONAL POWER;
CLARITY AT LAST?

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Report Documentation Page

1. REPORT DATE **03 MAY 2004**	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED **-**	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE **The Information Element of National Power; Clarity at Last?**		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
		5b. GRANT NUMBER	
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) **Raymond Lamb**		5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
		5e. TASK NUMBER	
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **U.S. Army War College,Carlisle Barracks,Carlisle,PA,17013-5050**		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT **Approved for public release; distribution unlimited**			
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES			
14. ABSTRACT **See attached file.**			
15. SUBJECT TERMS			

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES **34**	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT **unclassified**	b. ABSTRACT **unclassified**	c. THIS PAGE **unclassified**			

ABSTRACT

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TITLE: Information Element of National Power, Clarity at Last?

FORMAT: Strategy Research Project

DATE: 19 March 2004   PAGES: 34   CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

This paper examines the grand strategy of the United States, the employment of the instruments of national power, for prosecuting of the Global War On Terrorism (GWOT).   The purpose of this examination is to assess the effectiveness of this strategy and determine if it will lead to winning the GWOT in a global security environment that has significantly changed. This assessment will show that because there is no integrating strategy to ensure consonance in employment of the instruments of national power, the U. S. is finding it increasingly difficult to achieve its strategic objectives in this war. This analysis will conclude that in order to overcome this difficulty, the U.S. must employ the information element of national power with greater clarity in the global security environment. In order to achieve this clarity, the U.S. revamp its governmental structures to insure effective execution of an information strategy that meets the challenges of securing its national interests within the present-day complex global security environment.

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THE INFORMATION ELEMENT OF NATIONAL POWER; CLARITY AT LAST?

This paper will examine the grand strategy of the United States, the employment of the instruments of national power, for prosecuting of the Global War On Terrorism (GWOT). The purpose of this examination is to assess the effectiveness of this strategy and determine if it will lead to winning the GWOT in a global security environment that has significantly changed. This assessment will show that because there is no integrating strategy to ensure consonance in employment of the instruments of national power, the U. S. is finding it increasingly difficult to achieve its strategic objectives in this war. This analysis will conclude that in order to overcome this difficulty, the U.S. must employ the information element of national power with greater clarity in the global security environment. Considerations for the employment of the information element must be elevated to that of becoming an integrating strategy that ensures the coherent employment of all instruments of national power. If information becomes an integrating strategy then the instruments of power can be applied dynamically to shape perceptions and influence behaviors of intended targeted audiences to best achieve the strategic objectives for the GWOT. This construct will require that the political, economic, and military building blocks of the grand strategy to increasingly rely on employing information to realize their full power potential.[1] Coherent application of all the instruments of nation power will ensure protection of the nation's interests at least cost. The important question for this analysis becomes, is the United States effectively employing the information element of national power as part of its grand strategy?

This paper does not focus on the technological advances that led to the birth of the information age nor any of the associated technical challenges these advances created regarding information infrastructure vulnerabilities and protection. The focus rather is on analyzing the implications of executing the grand strategy for the GWOT in a global strategic security environment where improved global access to and speed of information exchange is facilitated by these technological advances. This environment overlapped the end of the bipolar Cold War era in a way that amplifies the implications of the sole remaining super power not achieving clarity when executing strategic information engagements. The U.S. cannot afford to be ill-prepared to operate effectively in this globally interconnected environment that exposes both new opportunities and vulnerabilities. The United States must master the art of information engagement within the information battlespace of the modern strategic environment in order to sustain the strategic advantage it now enjoys.

THE STRATEGIC INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

> "The world, thus, is entering into a global order--or disorder, as the case may be--that is post-Westphalian, and post-Clausewitzian. It is something new. In a dialectical sense, it bears some resemblance to the pre-Westphalian order of diverse kinds of polities, but it involves a much higher order of complexity among actors, and, above all, it changes at hyper-speed". [2]

DEFINING INFORMATION ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION BATTLESPACE

The United States is at war. A new kind of war where the dynamics of applying influence and shaping perceptions in the information battlespace through the use of precision information engagements can profoundly impact the strategic security environment. Neither information engagement nor information battlespace are defined doctrinal terms. Because existing doctrinal terms are insufficient, it is necessary to develop these concepts to describe more accurately what this paper is suggesting.

Combining the useful portions of the term's *information* and *engagement* produced the suggested term *information engagement*. *Information* is the meaning assigned to sensing from the environment (FM 6-0). *Engagement* is being actively involved in or committed (Webster's). Thus, the definition for *information engagement* is the sensing from the environment resulting from the active involvement of or commitment of images, words and ideas intended to influence or shape perceptions. *Information engagement*, as used in this paper, is the deliberate employment of information for the purposes of shaping perceptions and influencing actions of an intended target to advance or protect U.S national interest.

The suggested term *information battlespace* results from merging the doctrinal definitions for *information environment* and *battlespace*, to form this more useful term. Joint Pub 3-13 defines the information environment as "... the aggregate of individuals, organizations, or systems that collect, process, or disseminate information, including the information itself." [3] This term recognizes that individual, organizations, systems and information itself are all active in a defined environment; however, the environment it defines is too large to be completely useful. Joint Pub 3-0 defines battlespace as "... the environmental factors, and conditions which must be understood to successfully apply combat power, protect the force, or complete the mission ... this includes [the] information environment." This term conveys that one must understand environmental factors and conditions in order to affect them; however, the effect is achieved through the application of the military element of national power exclusively. The more useful term *information battlespace* becomes: understanding the environmental factors that affect the ability of individuals, organizations or systems that collect process, or disseminate information

for the purposes of applying influence or shaping perceptions. The *Information battlespace*, as used in this paper, is a defined environment where information engagements take place.

Some might argue, why not just use the term "information warfare?" This doctrinal term also fell short in being complete enough as it confines the employment of information to "times of crisis or conflict" (JP 3-13) and implies the use of information only against an opponent or adversary. The suggestion here is that the effective employment of information must be a constant across the full spectrum of conflict and against any target audience necessary to prevent or resolve conflict.

EMERGING IMPORTANCE OF THE INFORMATION BATTLESPACE

The global information battlespace is arguably the most critical battlespace within the strategic security environment. Decisions lead to conflict and decisions are based on perceptions and beliefs that are rooted in information. There is growing recognition that all corners of the world are linked informationally in significant ways because of the advancements in information technology. It is now possible to observe in near real-time the transmission of images, words and actions that have the power to influence attitudes and shape the perceptions that underpin decisions to act in some manner. This global information infrastructure has profound implications on the ways nations develop and execute their grand strategy to achieve strategic objectives more effectively and efficiently within the information battlespace of the global security environment.

Traditionally, national security experts have centered the development of U.S. grand strategy [or simply "strategy" as defined in JP 1-02] on the employment of political [diplomatic], military and economic instruments of national power and on the development of infrastructure.[4] Over the past three years, each of the traditional instruments of U.S. national power have attempted to create an organization within its structure to ensure the effective execution of information engagements within a designate strategic information battlespace. The White House Office of Global Communications, under the National Security Advisor is responsible for the information element of national power primarily directed toward domestic audiences. The Secretary of State established the office of Deputy Secretary of State for Policy and Public Affairs supporting the diplomat element of national power and primarily directed toward foreign audiences. The Department of Defense stood up, for short period, the Office of Strategic Influence to execute the military instrument's information engagements. The Secretary of the Treasury stood up the Deputy Secretary of the Treasury for Public Affairs to meet the economic element's information requirements. The diplomatic, informational, military and economic

(DIME) instruments are conducting information engagement within their individual stovepipes and coordination between the instruments is tenuous at best. There is little coherence and synergy in the effects of their combined information engagements. This practice leads to generation of misperceptions around the world about U.S. grand strategy goals and objectives. The reason for this disjointedness is clear, no executive department within the U.S. government has been given responsibility to ensure coherence and effective execution of information engagements that support U.S. grand strategy goals and objectives.

It is essential that the United States takes the lead in defining how nations will conduct strategic information engagements within the information battlespace that are increasingly played out in real-time. The United States was the first to declare war in an age where the strategic environment has so radically changed. Additionally, the United States is the nation best postured to take on this leadership responsibility. Two realities have shaped today's strategic information battlespace. First, the United States emerged from the cold war as the sole global superpower. Second, advancements in information technology have significantly increased the speed of information engagements within the information battlespace that have the ability to influence behavior and effect perceptions. Both realities will have an impact on how effective the United States will be in executing its grand strategy.

Concerning the first reality, the United States must contend with and assuage the fears of an anxious world. The potential growing world fear is that the United States will take advantage of its position to assume the role as global hegemon; a position that is contrary to the traditional bipolar world order that most nations were comfortable with. There is growing uneasiness with the "unprecedented, unrestrained and unpredictable power" of the United States.[5] The United States must be sensitive to this perception when considering how to express its intentions clearly through coherent execution of information engagements supporting its grand strategy. The global community intensely scrutinizes what the U.S. is communicating and their opinion matters especially in the information battlespace of critical regions of the world.

Standing as a stark point in history that bought both clarity and confusion to the global community's understanding of the emerging importance and impact of advances in information technology on the strategic information environment were the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Clarity in that these advances in information technology permitted the world to witnesses the sounds and images of commercial airliners impacting the Twin Towers and Pentagon nearly simultaneously with their occurrence. At that moment, the international community realized how vulnerable the United States and they themselves had become to asymmetric attacks. The world was able to share with all Americans the sounds, images, and emotions associated with

these attacks. This experience also demonstrated the confusion that results when a nation must contend with perceptions and opinions quickly formed by adversaries and friends facilitated by the ever-increasing speed and access to large volumes of information. The United States had no control over much of this information either in content or in volume.

INFORMATION IS THE PREEMINENT ELEMENT OF GRAND STRATEGY

The nature of warfare in the information battlespace is consistent with what Carl Von Clausiwitz observed when he stated "war is essentially an expression of hostile attitudes."[6] A modern expression of this classic observation would add, "in near real-time." If this is true, then mastery of employing ideas, words and images that influence perceptions and change behavior -- hostile attitudes -- in near real-time is the essence of success in modern strategic information engagements.   Mastery of skillful strategic information engagements will result is what Sun Tzu defines as the greatest acme of strategic engagement.

> "For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.   He who excels at resolving difficulties does so before they arise. He who excels in conquering his enemies triumphs before threats materialize."[7]

Masterful engagement in well defined strategic information battlespaces is essential if the United States is to avoid increased risk of military involvement around the world protecting its national interest. It is generally accepted that large-scale conventional war will be rare or even obsolete in a globalized world; the extreme cost would make engaging in conventional large-scale war too risky.   However, asymmetric threats and non-state actors are emerging in this complex security environment that directly threatens the interests of the U.S. The U.S. must be clear when employing the instruments of national power in a deliberate manner if it intends to favorably shape the strategic security environment. Clarity is necessary in the execution of an information strategy designed to assure, dissuade, or deter intended targets in a manner that prevents conventional and unconventional threats from materializing. If deterrence fails, U.S. information engagements must rapidly set conditions for the defeat of a threat and return to conditions favorable to peacefully promoting U.S. interests.

ENGAGEMENT IN THE GLOBAL INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

> "Information is the new coin of the International realm, and the United States is better positioned than any of the country to multiply the potency of its hard and soft power resources through information."[8]

> — Nye and Owens
> America's Information Edge: The Nature of Power

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Experts generally break the global information environment into two poles: (1) the technological pole which is focused on technological aspects; "cyberspace" and (2) politics of ideas; "soft power."[9] While much attention and study has gone into understanding cyberspace relatively little attention has been given to understanding the employment of information in support of a strategy that promotes ideas within the information environment using technical and non-technical means. Strategies that manifest themselves in the employment of images, words, and actions intended to influence and shape the strategic environment can maximize effects and minimize physical damage that usually is counterproductive to long-term political objectives.

In order to effectively shape the global security environment the U.S. must be able to conduct dynamic precision information engagements through the application of the appropriate element of national power in near real-time. This is done to either proactively shape the strategic environment or to respond effectively in a crisis.   Previously the impact of information engagements within the strategic environment took long enough to allow a slow and deliberate decision-making and employment process. There was slack in the process because it took time for the volume of information necessary to shape public opinion or influence governmental leaders to make its way through immature information conduits to reach and affect the intended target(s). Means and methods were disconnected, immature, and often in competition with each other. Execution of the information strategy through the independent DIME stovepipes was not a fatal flaw because the timelines were long enough to allow recovery from poor or faulty decision making. With the growing volume and speed of information engagements within the information battlespace, it nearly impossible to execute an effective information strategy if information engagements are executed in DIME stovepipes. This is especially true if these information engagements are not in consonance, or at a minimum deconflicted with one another. If the above is true, then information, can become an integrating strategy for the employment of all the instruments of national power. It would serve to synchronize, rationalize, and focus the employment of all instruments of national power to include the Bush administration's expanded instruments of law enforcement, financial, and intelligence.[10]

There must be coherence between words and actions among all the instruments of national power to persuade intended target audiences in near real-time. In an interconnected world, it has become increasingly evident that the traditional application of the instruments of national power will become less effective if not galvanized by a clearly articulated information strategy. More individuals now populate the information battlespace and the issues that arise within this space are more complex. Governments must "win the support of people and their leaders in other countries if diplomacy and military actions are to succeed."[11]

THE INFORMATION ELEMENT OF THE U.S. GRAND STRATEGY FOR THE GWOT

To support the reader's understanding of the issues being addressed in this paper and to highlight the importance of an articulated strategy for the employment of information element to defeat terrorists and terrorism, it is instructive to examine the U.S. grand strategy and its implementation for the GWOT from an information campaign perspective. The GWOT places the United States in the position of being the first nation to declare war in this strategic information battlespace where a globalized world is responding at ever increasing speed to the impacts of its information engagements. As previously indicated, the key question becomes; is the United States being effective in mastering information engagements in the strategic information battlespace of the GWOT?

DEFINING THE STRATEGIC INFORMATION BATTLE SPACE FOR THE GWOT

The United States declared "war" on terrorists and correctly so, for as previously stated "war is essentially an expression of hostile attitudes."[12] Terrorists clearly pose hostile attitudes toward the United States and its interest around the world. However, the U.S. is still trying to come to grips with what the true nature of the enemy is in this war. It is interesting to note that from the writing of the National Security Strategy of the United States (NSS) in September 2002 to the writing of the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism (NSCT) in February 2003, the definition of what "the enemy was not" was amended. The NSS stated that the enemy <u>was not</u> a "single political regime or person or religion *or ideology.*"[13] Within a short five months this definition was amended in the NSCT's definition of what the enemy was not. The NSCT omitted *ideology* as part of its description.[14] This is a significant change that demonstrates the realization that defeating the ideological aims of terrorist is an essential element to winning the war on terrorism. Within the strategic information battlespace, this translates into winning the "war of ideas."[15] To win the war of ideas, information engagements executed by the collective employment of the instruments of power must be clearer that ever before in attacking the ideological foundations of terrorists, terrorism and the logic of states that support terrorism.

President Bush stated in Section IX of the September 2002 NSS that; "this is a struggle of ideas and this is an area where America must excel."[16] This statement establishes as a strategic imperative that America must master the art of clarity in communicating to "help people around the world learn about and understand America."[17] Newt Gingrich noted that "a country as large and as powerful as the United States must work every day to communicate what it is doing. The world does not have to love us, but it must be able to predict us."[18] The United States must communicate clearly how it intends to defeat terrorism as the world's only

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remaining superpower. The world must clearly "understand" the United States' vital interests and how it will go about achieving its goals and objectives in winning the GWOT. The world is evaluating every image, word, and action emanating from the United States for consistency in its information engagements in the strategic information battlespace of the GWOT.

DETERMINING THE INFORMATION ELEMENT GOAL FOR THE GWOT

Since the United States is the first nation to declare war in the changed strategic security environment it is important to understand how this war will be waged with particular attention paid to defining the goal(s) for the information element. Although not expressly stated as the strategy goal for the information element, the NSS states that a "comprehensive approach to public information efforts that can help people around the world learn about and understand America"[19] can be used to help construct a goal for the U.S. information strategy for GWOT. Also according to the NSS, this war is being waged not as a clash of civilizations but as clashes inside civilizations. Therefore, the center of gravity, if you will, becomes the will of the people within the defined information battlespace of the GWOT. If the above is true, then the goal for the information element becomes: increase the will of the people [regionally and internationally] to counter the ideology that breeds terrorism.

The lack of clearly defined goal has had a detrimental affect on the United States attempts to excel at influence and persuasion. Former ambassador to the United Nations, Richard Holbrooke, stated in March of 2003 that the "American public information campaign is a confused mess."[20] In a Los Angeles Times article it was reported that U.S. diplomats said, "they were profoundly worried about what they described as the [Bush] administrations arrogance or indifference to world public opinion...."[21] By adopting the above proposed goal, the U.S. could press forward with completing an information strategy that accomplishes this goal. This strategy requires clearly articulated supporting objectives.

DETERMINING THE INFORMATION ELEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR THE GWOT

It is interesting to note that in assessing the U.S. grand strategy for the GWOT outlined in the NSCT, there are no clearly outlined goals and objectives for the information element or for an information campaign. In an attempt to determine what could be plausible objectives for the information campaign supporting the GWOT, the following resources will be examined: (1) NSS; (2) NSCT; (3) U.S. policy as communicated through government web sites that promulgates statements made by the Presidential and other senior governmental leaders. If the goals and supporting objectives are clear and appropriate, then they should lead to the increased probability of creating conditions favorable to winning the GWOT. If the goal is to increase the

will of the people to counter the ideology that breeds terrorism, then what are the objectives that would support this goal?

An examination of the NSCT provides a useful framework to build an information campaign to answer to this question. The NSCT refined the above stated NSS goal for the GWOT and constructed a "4D" strategy [Defeat, Deny, Diminish and Defend]. [22] These four goals [also referred to as pillars or four fronts] provide structure for the development of plausible information objectives to build and information campaign for the GWOT.   By adjusting the existing components/instruments of the four goals and supporting objectives, the following workable information objectives can be created:

- Goal: Defeating terrorist together with U.S. allies by attacking their sanctuaries.
  Information Objective: Encourage international *cooperation* to curb terrorist funding.
- Goal: Denying terrorists sponsorship, support, and sanctuary/safe havens.
  Information Objectives:
  - *Induce policy changes* of individual states that sponsor terrorism.
  - *Promote standards internationally* for combating terrorism.
- Goal: Diminishing underlying conditions that terrorist exploit.
  Information Objectives:
  - *Induce the international community* to alleviate *conditions* leading to failed states that breed terrorism.
  - *De-legitimize terrorists and terrorist organizations*.
- Goal: Defending U.S. citizens and interest at home and abroad.
  Information Objective: *Promote U.S. intentions to protect its vital interests.* (This is not expressly stated but is implied.)

The resulting supporting objectives developed above become the basis for constructing an information campaign that could serve as an integrating strategy for the employment of all instruments of national power in achieving the stated goals of the combating terrorism strategy. Although the above information objectives are not explicitly stated, it is clear that the intent for the application of the information element is that the proposed objectives are accomplished. The question now becomes how does the U.S. intend to accomplish these goals and objectives within defined information battlespaces of the GWOT?

EXECUTING THE INFORMATION CAMPAIGN STRATEGY FOR TO THE GWOT

The NSCT identifies four categories of state conditions -- battlespaces -- that define their stance on engaging in the war on terrorism: (1) States that are willing and able, (2) States that

are weak but willing; (3) States that are reluctant; (4) States that are unwilling. Information engagements supporting the probable GWOT information campaign are executed within these defined battlespaces. This paper will examine how well the U.S. is executing its probable information strategy within what is emerging as the most critical information battlespace in the GWOT, that of Southeast Asia. The countries of Southeast Asia can generally be grouped into the category of states that are week but willing to engage in the GWOT. A determination will be made as to the effectiveness of the employment of the information instruments as a organizing strategy to coalesce the instruments of national power in achieve the goals and objectives of the information campaign. An assessment will be made as to whether or not there is clarity, consonance, and consistency in the employment of the instruments of national power guided by the information objectives of the strategy.

SOUTHEAST ASIA CASE STUDY:

> "Asia is not just about "being there" – our presence and partnerships are the starting point for building a lasting framework for economic growth and cooperation – a fellowship of fee nations fully committed to a prosperous and secure Asia."[23]

<div align="right">

— Condoleezza Rice
National Security Advisor to President Bush

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The Southeast Asia region is defined by the 10 nations that form the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). ASEAN nations are generally willing to engage in combating terrorism but do not posses the ability to address the growing network of terrorist and terrorism within this region because of various economic, political and military challenges they face. Because of these complexities, the security of this region is dependent on the successful execution of an information campaign that advances the GWOT information objectives leading to eliminating the terrorist threat in this region. The employment of any one single element of national power will not achieve the U.S. GWOT goal in this region. The information front in the war on terrorism must be fought successfully to prevent the spread of radical Islamic ideology within this region. The information objectives that best apply to countering this threat within the Southeast Asia information battlespace are:

- encourage international cooperation to curb terrorist funding;
- promote standards internationally for combating terrorism;
- induce the international community to alleviate conditions leading to failed states that breed terrorism; and
- use public information initiatives to de-legitimize terrorism.

The U.S. must be successful in conducting information engagements that achieve consonance between the various employment strategies of the instruments of national power to advance these objectives.   According to Philippine immigration commissioner Andrew Domingo, "there is a huge propaganda war that is being waged right now and I think that we are not really winning in that arena."[24] Recently, the Philippine's national security adviser, Roilo Golez, stated that Philippine agents obtained Jemmah Islamiya (JI) plans for the establishment of a Muslim pan-Islamic state that would consist of Indonesia, Malaysia, parts of northern Australia and the Philippines.[25] The direction this region goes could either complicate or ease the advancement of U.S. security interests. President Bush during his travels though Asia stated that the U.S. considers Southeast Asia one of many fronts in the war on terrorism and encourages other governments in the region to do more in the fight against Islamic extremists.[26] A politically stable and economically viable ASEAN will support the promotion of democratic ideals and economic openness that are key to maintaining security and prosperity in this region.

NATIONAL INTEREST (U.S. & ALLIES)

There are three strategic interest issues for the U.S. in Southeast Asia. First, the region is economically important to the U.S. and its allies.[27] Maintaining security and freedom of commerce movement through the strategically significant straits of Malacca, Makasar, and Singapore are of vital importance to the U.S. and its allies. Forty percent of the world's shipping passes through these Southeast Asian straits. This shipping includes eighty percent of the oil that supports the economy of Japan; a significant strategic ally. It is becoming evident that al-Qaeda is planning to conduct maritime attacks on ships and ports in the Malacca Straits intended to traumatize the world economy. [28] Secondly, this region is strategically important to stemming the growth of threats that could challenge U.S. national interest. A prosperous ASEAN serves as a stabilizing political and economic check to the hegemonic aspirations of China.[29] Intelligence reporting links every single major al-Qaeda terrorist plot around the world since 1993, to include the 911 attacks, to planning cells that exists or existed within the countries of Southeast Asia.[30] It is clear that terrorist are now starting to shift their strategy towards more economic targets in this region as well as in other critical regions around the world. Lastly, this region is key as it stands astride "two of the world's most influential doctrines: Islam and Democracy."[31] This region constitutes nearly 25 percent of the world's Muslim population that provides al-Qaeda potential fertile ground to base its operations. The battle lines are drawn according to Roman Gunaratan, author of "Inside al-Qaeda."[32] The forward edge of the information battlespace of the GWOT runs though Southeast Asia.

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DIPLOMATIC

The U.S. political objectives for the Asia-Pacific region have undergone "new thinking" regarding where the U.S. will concentrate its efforts according to Christopher LaFleur, Special Envoy for Northeast Asia Security Consultations. He went on further to state in his 26 June 2002 testimony before the House Committee on International Relations' Asia and Pacific Subcommittee that U.S. political goals for this region include:

- strengthening alliances to defeat global terrorism,
- defusing regional conflicts, and
- preventing enemies "from threatening us, our allies, and our friends with weapons of mass destruction." [33]

Although the NSCT was published after Lafleur presented these objectives, they are consistent with the NSCT's stated objectives and match up well with the proposed information campaign objectives outlined above for the Southeast Asia region. In particular these political objectives support the greater information objectives of inducing the international community to alleviate conditions leading to failed states that breed terrorism and employ public information initiatives to de-legitimize terrorism. The diplomatic instrument taking the lead in advancing this information objective best supports achieving this objective. If the diplomatic instrument's objectives can at least be derived, as suggested above, to supporting the execution of successful information engagements then the question becomes how well is the information instrument doing in accomplishing these objectives? The answer should be that the U.S., through the successful execution of its diplomatic information strategy in coordination with the other instruments, has successfully induced its allies to defeat terrorism, defuse regional conflicts and alleviate conditions that could lead to the failure of a state in Southeast Asia.

Representative James A. Leach, Chairman, Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific stated in February, 2002 that the "Asia-Pacific region is looming larger in American national security policy."[34] The success of the anti-terrorism campaign depends on the multilateral cooperation between the U.S. and a broad coalition of other countries. However, Washington has not been effective in conducting effective information engagements in this battlespace. According to Representative Leach, the U.S. has not made the explicit articulation of these elements of the grand strategy clear.[35] Since Leach's observation Condoleezza Rice, in October 2003, admitted that the U.S. is still finding difficulty communicating "the clarity of our commitments to our allies". [36] The region, left on its own to form its perceptions, has developed a negative opinion about U.S. intentions in the region. In a survey conducted by Foreign Policy magazine, the perception of U.S. policy [in reality U.S. policy information engagements] was

assessed in the major regions or information battlespaces of the world.   The U.S. marks were significantly lower in Southeast Asia as compared to all other regions. Most significant among the areas being assessed [on a scale of 1 – 10; 10 being best; see chart 1] the U.S. received a "1" in "building alliances and coalitions." Even more troubling was the "0" given to the U.S. ability to "balance rhetoric with reality" and the "2" given for being able to "speak with one voice" relating to maintaining policy consistency among all the departments of State, Defense, and Treasury. [37]

The Global Scorecard

Foreign Policy asked each of our nine contributors to grade U.S. President George W. Bush's international leadership skills in nine categories on a scale of 0 (low) to 10 (high).

Region/Country	Africa	China	Eastern Europe	Latin America	Middle East	Russia	South Asia	Southeast Asia	Western Europe	Average	Contributors' Comments
Advancing U.S. Interests in the World	4	5	8	7	10	6	6	4	4	6.0	"Bush appears to do better at enhancing short-to medium-term power than promoting long-term interest." (South Asia)
Building Alliances and Coalitions (working with allies; cooperating with other countries)	2	4	4	5	4	4	3	1	1	3.1	"Bush's continued negligence of the interests and sentiments of other countries may help spark more anti-American coalitions." (China)
Cooperating Through Multilateral Institutions (working effectively with multilaterals such as the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund)	2	5	3	3	5	4	3	1	2	3.1	"In terms of cooperating with the United Nations, I give him a 0; with the IMF, a 6. It took his first treasury secretary at least a year to discover that the IMF could do any good." (Latin America)
Conducting Personal Diplomacy (establishing good relations and rapport with world leaders)	2	6	4	2	3	7	2	1	5	3.6	"Bush seems more concerned with establishing fealty rather that friendship. Leaders who waver in their support for his policies are swiftly disparaged and brought to heel." (Southeast Asia)
Making Tough Choices (willing to make difficult or unpopular choices)	6	8	8	9	8	9	4	4	8	7.1	"One of President Bush's most admirable traits is his willingness to stay the course, even at the risk of losing his popularity at home and abroad." (Russia)
Balancing Rhetoric With Reality	5	6	7	7	5	7	5	0	5	5.2	"On the war against Iraq, I give him a 9; on other matters, a 5." (Latin America)
Using Strategic Creativity (expressing a coherent vision for the world; expressing a strategic vision for the U.S. role in the world)	2	7	7	5	8	6	4	2	9	5.6	"He earns a high score for creativity, not for having the right strategy." (Western Europe) "There is little sense of what his conception of a 'New World Order' would be." (South Asia)
Attracting the Best and the Brightest (assembling a strong foreign policy team)	4	5	6	7	5	6	6	7	8	6.0	"He has assembled a strong team, but the Cold War - era hawks have completely drowned out voices of reason." (Africa)
Speaking With One Voice (maintaining a consistent policy among all the departments in the executive branch, such as State, Defense, and Treasury)	5	3	5	7	5	6	9	2	8	5.6	"There are obvious State-Defense and State-Treasury differences, but by the standards of past administrations and realistic standards, the administration has been fairly disciplined." (Latin America)
Region/Country Average:	3.6	5.4	5.8	5.8	5.9	6.1	4.7	2.4	5.6	5.0	Global Average Score

TABLE 1

Failure to reinforce U.S. strategic objectives through clear and effective information engagements has resulted in the U.S. diplomatic instrument producing underwhelming results within this information battlespace.   Southeast Asians are suspicious of U.S. motives and intentions and see U.S. unilateral actions in the GWOT as demonstrating little concern for the opinions of international institutions that ASEAN government's view as an important to constrain larger powers.[38] Indonesian presidential advisor Dewi Fortuna Anwar stated that opinions in Southeast Asia regarding the U.S. have dramatically changed from that of "being the object of global sympathy into [being] a propagator of world conflict."[39] Furthermore, U.S. failure to

produce sufficient evidence linking Osama bin Laden to 911 or clear evidence of the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq have continued to undermined U.S. credibility in this battlespace. The lack of clarity in actions taken in the region that are consistent with support information engagements intended to bolster regional governments support in the GWOT have likewise been ineffective. Political conditions in Indonesia are so volatile that the Government of Indonesia has not recognized the IJ as a terrorist organization. The Philippine Government has denied that the Philippine based Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) committed acts of terrorism in Indonesia.[40]

MILITARY

The military, supported by the other instruments of national power can best advance the information objective of promoting standards internationally for combating terrorism. However, the lack of clarity in the political information engagements has complicated the ability of the military to conduct effective information engagements and supporting operations. James Leach, chairman of the house International Relations Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific stated in February 2002, that "U.S. bilateral treaties and security partnerships, backed by capable forward-stationed and deployed armed forces, remain essential for deterring aggression and promoting peaceful development in the region."[41] He went on further to state that the campaign against terrorism "crucially depends on intensive and ongoing multilateral cooperation between the United States and a broad coalition of other countries."[42] Although there is continuing progress being made towards building these relationships in this region, the military instrument of national power is the preferred instrument being used to build these coalitions. This assessment stems from two observations about the employment of the military to advance the above suggested information objectives. First, USPACOM is assuming a larger role in executing information engagements for the other instruments of national power in this region. USPACOM's military commanders are spending increasing time in the region attempting to build U.S. relations through mil-to-mil and mil-to-government contacts. Secondly, in order for the military to engage in actions that send the desired messages, the political and economic messages must set the conditions and framework for these actions to have the desired effect. This necessity is best illustrated by examining the U.S./Philippine anti-terrorism effort intended to destroy the Abu Syaff terrorist organization in 2001/02. The inability of the U.S. government and the Government of the Philippines (GOP) to resolve what the characterization of U.S. and the Armed Forces of the Philippine (AFP) cooperation would in the execution of GWOT missions is an example of message inconsistency. The U.S. communicated that this U.S./GOP

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cooperation was characterized as Operation Enduring Freedom – Philippines (OEF-P) where as the GOP referred to this cooperation as Exercise Balikatan. The in ability of the U.S. diplomatic instrument to resolve this constitutional issue with the GOP, that being the Philippine constitutional prohibition against foreign militaries operating within their sovereign territories, restricted the effectiveness of the bilateral military mission. This failure coupled with not authorizing additional funds needed to significantly enhance AFP capabilities, the U.S. military had to rely on only providing training and intelligence support to the AFP to continue this mission.

In addition, the U.S. strategy for this region includes building coalitions to fight the GWOT. In the case of OEF-P, the Filipinos and the U.S. are currently the only military forces directly engaged in this effort. Although Bush hailed Australia as the "sheriff" in Southeast Asia, their involvement has been on the periphery. [43]   Australia could be classified as a state that is willing to engage in the GWOT. However, there has been no overt effort to get the Australians, a critical influential ally in the region, more clearly engaged in OEF-P. The lack of substantial overt involvement of this and other willing nations in the militarily engagements of OEF-P creates inconsistencies in the message that encourages international cooperation and international community involvement in alleviating the suffering that breeds terrorism.

ECONOMIC

The 1997-98 Southeast Asian economic crisis and subsequent slow recovery has left this region susceptible to the growth of terrorist ideologies. The economic instrument of national power, working in concert with the diplomatic instrument, has the ability to act effectively in achieving the information objectives of encouraging international cooperation to curb terrorist funding and induce the international community to alleviate conditions leading to failed states that breed terrorism.   Regarding the first information objective, the U.S. designation of the ASG in 2001 and the JI in 2002 as terrorist organizations permitted the Department of Treasury to pursue the objective of cutting off funds to these organizations. The ability of Treasury to engage in an information campaign to solicit support from nations of the willing to enact finance reforms that result in cutting off funding to terrorists was enhanced by complementary diplomatic instrument actions. Diplomatic efforts obtained the support of Australia, Indonesia, Singapore, and 46 other countries, including all the members of ASEAN and the EU, in designating the JI as a terrorist organization.[44] This international support was the most significant to date in the war on terrorism and set the conditions for the economic element's successful employment.

However, Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of the Treasury, Mr. Juan C. Zarate stated that in order for this level of success to be repeated "political and diplomatic pressure must be sustained on our partners abroad and the international institutions in which we engage to continue to focus on the problems associated with terrorist financing...[the more the] "memories of terrorist incidents recedes, the harder it will be to maintain a sense of urgency internationally to act against terrorism."[45] Success in this endeavor requires the continued employment of clear U.S. communication regarding the importance of this unity of effort and that our own resolve is not seen abroad as wavering from this objective.   The U.S. ability to sustain the clarity in information engagements advancing this objective has lost volume over time.

The accomplishment of the second information objective has likewise lost momentum because the US is not staying engaged in the region and thus has lost opportunities to advance this objective. The Economic element missed opportunities at the 2003 Cancun ministerial conference to chart a way to reinvigorate the WTO negotiations that would have positively strengthened APEC.[46] Because this opportunity for the U.S. to leverage its influence in garnering international support was lost, APEC was unable to realize aid that would have accelerated its economic recover. In this globalized information environment, it will be an increasing challenge to advance information objectives if significant opportunities are missed. In addition, other U.S. vital interests are threatened because of the slow economic recovery of the region. China is moving to exert greater influence in the region which may become counter to U.S. strategic interests in Southeast Asia.

SUMMARY

This case study exposes the challenges to how the U.S. currently employs its traditional instruments of national power intended to secure the national interests.   It also reveals the need for the U.S. to rethink how it is organized to insure that the instruments of national power achieve consonance when being employed dynamically to secure U.S. national interests. This is especially true in the post-Cold War era where there is less clarity about which goals are central and which are peripheral and where there are additional instruments of national power being employed to secure the national interests such as law enforcement, intelligence and financial instruments.   As it stands now, the conduct of information engagements to advance U.S. informational goals and objectives are ineffective in this region because there is a loss in clarity in their combined information engagements. Consequently, the growth of al-Qaeda's influence in Southeast Asia is increase exponentially because the incoherent application of U.S. instruments of power to ensure stability and prosperity in the region.

RECOMMENDATION

> "... the traditional, nation-state concept of coalition warfare must be rethought--something the Pentagon, the National Security Council, and the White House all seem unable to do so far."[47]

> — Alvin and Heidi Toffler
> In Athena's Camp: Preparing for Conflict in the Information Age

Directing the execution of the information element of national power is the purview of the President of the United States. To insure success of information engagements in the strategic information battlespace, the President must direct the creation of an organization with appropriate authority to plan and obtain synergy in the coherent and dynamic employment of information engagements generated by the instruments of national power. The closest recommended organizational structure that could support the President's ability to develop the information element into an organizing strategy is found in the 2001 Defense Science Board's (DSB) Managed Information Dissemination report. The DSB recommended that the President issue a National Security Policy Directive (NSPD) on international information dissemination that would establish the necessary framework for the employment of the information element of national power.[48]

There were two elements of this recommendation that deserve further consideration. First, the NSPD would require all regional and functional National Security Council (NSC) Policy Coordination Committees to:

- assess the potential impact of foreign public opinion when national security options are considered and
- recommend or develop strategies for public information dissemination strategies before or in concert with policy implementation.[49]

Secondly, the NSPD should establish a NSC Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) on International Information Dissemination.[50] The report also recommended that this PCC be chaired by a person of Under Secretary rank and be designated by the Secretary of State and assisted by the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. Members of this PCC would include senior ranking representatives from DoD, Treasury, Commerce, the Attorney General, CJCS, CIA, USAID and the Broadcasting Board of Governors. Its purpose would be to strengthen the U.S. Government's ability to communicate with foreign audiences to prevent and mitigate crises and advance long-term U.S. interests.[51] This PCC would be responsible for shaping understanding and generating timely public support for U.S. national security policies and to coordinate public diplomacy, public affairs, and open military information operations.[52]

The Secretariat should consist of the current interagency working group on international public information augmented with an expanded staff and budget from the NSC. [53] The PCC Secretariat should not be viewed as a State and Defense Department Condominium but report directly to the PCC.

This recommendation is a huge step in the right direction and with a few amendments would be a workable solution. First, the PCC's Under Secretary chair in the NSC should be elevated to a cabinet position. This would provide this cabinet member with the necessary power to direct coordination of information strategies between governmental departments. When the level of disputes began to rise between DoD and DoS president Bush instructed his national security advisor to take greater charge of the day-to-day Iraq policy. This responsibility was not foreign to its design as Mr. Powell acknowledged in saying that "it's the normal work of the National Security Council."[54] So the creation of a cabinet level position responsible for employing the information element of national power would not be unique enough to cause insurmountable friction. Secondly, the NSC must be given sufficiently structure, funding and proper authorities to conduct planning and supervise execution of the approved information strategy for the U.S.

Another approach to reorganization would be to pursue Newt Gingrich's recommendation which suggested that President "Bush should call for the equivalent of a Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act (which in 1986 mandated a comprehensive reform of the U.S. Department of Defense) applicable to the State Department."[55] This would accomplish what is being suggested in this paper. However, Mr. Gingrich's recommended target – that being the DoS should not be the only focus of this reorganization. This reorganization effort needs to be directed towards the NSC as well. By taking a Goldwater-Nichols approach, Congress would be endorsing this reshaping of government.

CONCLUSION

How the United States leads the world in defining and combating the threat of non-state actors, currently represented in the form of terrorism, has implications on how nations will deal with defeating other developing threats to world stability. The complexity of changes in the global security environment will require the U.S. to rethink how it applies its instruments of national power. Clarity in tailored and coordinated information engagements is becoming perhaps the most important factor in shaping the future strategic security environment raising the importance of the information element to that of an integrating strategy. The U.S. must be

clear about how it sees its role and the role of nations that are willing to favorably shaping the strategic information environment.

The President needs an organization that can bring clarity to what the U.S. is communicating through the employment of all its instruments of national power to ensure they are working in consonance and not at cross purposes. The U.S. must achieve clarity at last in the information engagements of the instruments of national power. This can be achieved by establishing the information element as an organizing strategy and by assigning responsibility and authority to the right leader to execute the President's approved information strategy.

WORD COUNT= 7468

ENDNOTES

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[5] John Ikenberry, "Getting Hegemony Right", *The National Interest*, Spring 2001, 17.

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[11] Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, *Managing Information Dissemination*, Washington, D.C.:Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force, October 2001), 50.

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[14] NSCT, 1.

[15] NSCT, 2.

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